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ABSTRACT

Education authorities and schools throughout Australia articulate a range of goals when they comment on the purposes of schooling. Those goals include development of the skills with which a young person might come to understand the world and earn a living. This report concerns a study designed to investigate systematically how Australian schools provide for the social development of young people. The report presents a picture of the responses of young Australians to questions about how importantly they regard issues concerned with relating to others, community well being, social rules and conventions, how interested they are in continued learning, their self confidence, and their sense of optimism for the future. It goes beyond a description of social outcomes in these areas by reporting on variations among students and their schools according to year level, individual characteristics such as gender and social background, and characteristics of their schools. The report explains that the research project was conducted in two consecutive stages: the first stage was the definition and mapping phase involving descriptive aspects and review of the literature; the second stage involved collection and analysis of data from a survey of schools (n=324), teachers (n=2646), and students (n=8144) in a nationally representative sample of schools. Contains 32 tables, 6 figures, and 124 references. Appendices provide survey details and a sample questionnaire. (BT)

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